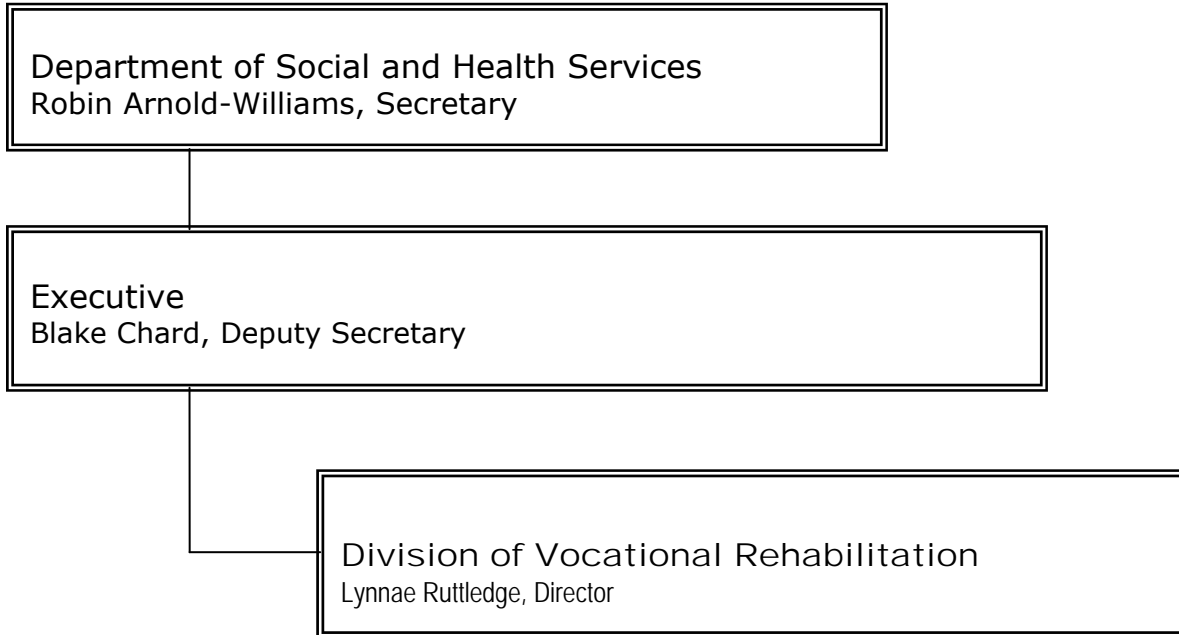




## A Strategic Plan for 2009-2013 Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



**Lynnae Ruttledge**  
Director  
April 11, 2008



## **Purpose of This Document**

This strategic plan communicates how we will increase the employment of individuals with disabilities in a changing environment and meet our future challenges. This document is a road map that guides the business practices and improvement strategies for our organization, employees, customers, and partners.

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## **Cover photo**

Jonathan Porter, right, is featured on the cover of this Strategic Plan. Jonathan is shown with Mylene Padolina, Senior Diversity Consultant at Microsoft, and his mentor Justin Saint Clair. Jonathan participated in a mentorship with Microsoft.

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## Executive Summary

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The past year has been one of remarkable achievements for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

- DVR eliminated its waiting list for services effective February 11, 2008. DVR has been operating with a waiting list since November 2000. At its peak, the waiting list had over 14,000 individuals.
- DVR improved its rehabilitation rate from 45.8% at the end of federal fiscal year 2006 to 60% as of this date. The federal standard is 55.8%. This improved success rate means that 244 more people were employed after services this fiscal year than would have been with the 2006 success rate.
- DVR has the caseload capacity to serve all eligible individuals who apply for services with no waiting.
- A new field management structure has been implemented, and managers are using GMAP and other performance reports to manage and communicate about DVR performance.
- New systems, policies, and partnerships have been established to enhance future DVR success.

These accomplishments position DVR to achieve greater success in the coming years. DVR will be able to serve all eligible individuals at the time they apply and are determined eligible for services. This is important because it enables counselors to capitalize on the motivation individuals have when they first apply for services and to help individuals move quickly towards a plan for employment. It also enables DVR to leverage funds by working closely with partner agencies that jointly serve and fund portions of the service delivery process.

DVR anticipates that eliminating the waiting list will help diversify the types of people with disabilities we serve. Under Order of Selection, DVR was required to prioritize services to those with the most significant disabilities. Over time, disability groups who did not meet the criteria for the highest priority category have stopped looking to DVR as a resource. Without a waiting list, DVR can now reach out to people with more varied disabilities who have gone unserved or underserved for several years. Many of these individuals may not require extensive services, but with more timely assistance, may be able to get or keep a job. DVR is now able to help these individuals achieve employment as well as those with more significant limitations.

Improving the quality of services provided to eligible individuals is reflected in a higher rehabilitation rate. The rehabilitation rate measures the percentage of individuals who successfully go to work as a result of receiving DVR services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). By improving our skills and expertise at identifying barriers to employment and addressing them through targeted services, DVR services are more effective more often. By gaining greater statewide consistency in case service practices, DVR is becoming more accountable. By implementing quality assurance activities, DVR supervisors and managers are able to provide better coaching to ensure case practices result in better outcomes. A higher rehabilitation rate also assures that the public funds DVR expends are achieving positive results for the citizens of Washington.

Through staff training and creative use of positions, DVR has changed the way services are delivered. DVR employees are providing more services directly rather than purchasing them, particularly up-front services that help individuals quickly engage in identifying their vocational strengths and planning the steps that lead to employment. DVR is also establishing positions that provide more support to individuals who are ready to go to work and need assistance with their job search. These positions will be located in WorkSource Centers to share our expertise with partners and to assist our customers in better accessing available services, resources, and job opportunities. DVR is critically analyzing how and where it delivers services. Our goal is to provide services in locations that maximize employment outcomes for our customers. When possible, DVR will be providing services and locating staff in WorkSource Centers, in educational settings, and in public and private sector settings that create more visibility for our customers and linking them to better employment outcomes.

DVR has made decisions about the use of its resources to maximize funds for direct case services. In addition, DVR has worked hard to enhance and build partnerships with other state, local and private organizations that deliver services to individuals with disabilities. These partnerships have contributed to more collaborative, cooperative services for individuals eligible for services from multiple programs. By reducing the average cost per case, DVR is able to serve significantly more individuals.

DVR continues to improve its ability to develop effective information and data for program planning and decision making. In addition to executive level GMAP (Government Management Accountability & Performance), DVR field managers use GMAP to manage and communicate performance results internally. A planning and evaluation unit formed in July 2006 meets the needs of DVR and the State Rehabilitation Council by providing tools that help DVR understand and use information and data related to performance,

caseload capacity and expenditures to guide planning and decision making. How to improve organizational performance and accountability is an ongoing conversation among DVR leadership supported by strong data and information.

DVR is looking forward with anticipation and excitement as it emerges from Order of Selection. We are well positioned for success and intend to rise to the forefront among VR agencies nationally in terms of performance and results. This four year Strategic Plan outlines efforts and activities DVR will take to enable Washingtonians with disabilities to achieve employment, improve self-sufficiency and contribute to the economy of the State of Washington.

# Chapter 1 • Our Guiding Directions

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## **MISSION**

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and maintaining employment.

## **STRATEGIC VISION**

DVR envisions a world in which people with disabilities who want to work are fully employed in career-focused positions providing competitive wages and benefits.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

DVR believes in:

- The transformative power of employment on individual lives.
- Delivering high quality vocational rehabilitation services.
- Honoring and respecting each individual's strengths, skills, abilities and cultural identity.
- Building community partnerships that enhance employment opportunities for those we serve.

## **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is designated to receive federal funds under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The Rehabilitation Act appears as Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, United States Code at 29 USC 701 et al. Seq.: Public Law 102-569. The code of federal regulations (CFR) outlining program authority and requirements is in Title 34 CFR, Part 361 and Part 363.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 74.29 authorizes the receipt of funds and delivery of vocational rehabilitation programs and services in Washington State. The purposes stated in RCW 74.29 include:

1. To rehabilitate individuals with disabilities who have a barrier to employment so that they may prepare for and engage in gainful occupation;
2. To provide persons with physical, mental, or sensory disabilities with a program of services which will result in greater opportunities for them to enter more fully into life in the community;



3. To promote activities which will assist individuals with disabilities to become self-sufficient and self-supporting; and
4. To encourage and develop community rehabilitation programs, job support services, and other resources needed by individuals with disabilities.

## Chapter 2 • The People We Serve

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### INTRODUCTION

DVR serves eligible individuals with all types of disabilities who want to work and need vocational rehabilitation services to address and overcome barriers to employment that result from a disability. Individuals are eligible for services if they have a physical, mental, or sensory disability that results in an impediment to employment and they require vocational rehabilitation services to become employed.

### DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

DVR develops an individualized plan of services for each eligible individual to achieve employment consistent with his or her strengths, abilities, capabilities, concerns, priorities, resources, interests and informed choice. The vocational rehabilitation services provided are based on an individualized assessment of each person's vocational rehabilitation needs. One-on-one counseling and guidance is the primary service offered by DVR throughout the rehabilitation process. Additionally, DVR may provide other services including, but not limited to, the following:

**Assistive technology services** are available to evaluate the ways that technology can be used to reduce the impact of disability-related limitations and increase an individual's capacity to perform work-related tasks and activities.

**Independent living services** help individuals increase their ability to manage a variety of basic life activities before they can prepare for or work successfully. Independent living services can include advocacy to locate safe, affordable housing, training to use public transportation, help setting up bank accounts and learning to manage one's own money, and other services.

**Physical and mental restoration services** help people cope with physical or mental health conditions that limit their ability to work. This can include physical or occupational therapy, vision and hearing evaluations, sensory aids and devices (hearing aids, glasses, etc.), mental health counseling or therapy and a number of other services.

Various **training services** are options for individuals who need to gain work skills, learn a new occupation or attain qualifying job credentials. The type of training one receives depends on his or her needs and goals. DVR supports individuals in on-the-job training, basic adult education, literacy, vocational and technical programs, and academic degree programs.

**Self-employment services** are provided to evaluate the feasibility of self-employment, develop a business plan, look for financing and support the start-up process.

**Job-related services** include job placement, internship opportunities, follow-up, and retention services. Services are used when an individual needs a customized job placement, needs help negotiating with an employer for job-related accommodations, or other job-related interventions and supports. Services enable individuals to adjust to the job, communicate effectively with the employer, and achieve satisfactory performance.

Individuals can also receive **support services** they need to engage in vocational rehabilitation services, such as transportation assistance and other support needed to participate in training, go to school, or look for a job.

## Chapter 3 • Appraisal of External Environment

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### **POTENTIAL CHANGES IN ECONOMY THAT CAN AFFECT CLIENTS' NEEDS**

It is difficult to project the future state of the Washington economy in the current environment. While 77,000 new jobs were created in Washington in 2007, the most recent state revenue projections predict revenue declines in the year ahead. Loss of a recent major aerospace contract and sharp declines in the housing industry have added to the sense that our state economy may be facing a downturn. While demand for services does not fluctuate greatly based on the strength of the economy, decreased job growth or high profile lay-offs can significantly impact the number and type of jobs available.

While there are long-standing industries that remain stable, others continue to emerge, grow, and create opportunities in new ways. DVR plans to take advantage of growing industry sectors such as health care and medical research, agriculture, environmental protection, alternative energy production, and information services. Taking advantage of these new and emerging sectors will require individuals to obtain increased levels of post-secondary training and education. The rising cost of post-secondary education and the need for support services are often factors that makes it difficult for individuals with low incomes to complete degree programs.

DVR is a statewide program with field offices in communities large and small throughout the state. Local economic factors, particularly the unemployment rate, play a significant role in the availability and access to employment opportunities. In rural areas, the rising cost of fuel for transportation can create barriers for individuals with low incomes in accessing and receiving services, attending training and looking for work.

### **TRENDS IN DEMOGRAPHIC AND CUSTOMER CHARACTERISTICS**

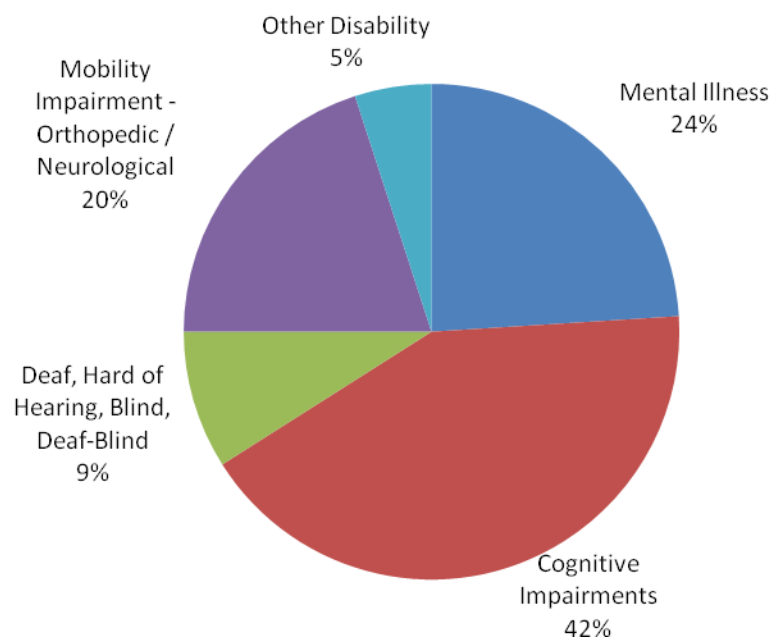
The needs of Washington citizens with significant health issues and those in poverty continue to grow as funding declines. Higher numbers of DVR clients experience mental illness as a primary or secondary disability than in previous years and DVR has been less successful helping these clients achieve employment outcomes. In addition, DVR had less success with individuals living in poverty and older populations. Both of these segments of the population are growing, making it critical for DVR to

partner effectively with other agencies and consider new service delivery options.

It is anticipated that reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act will include a greater emphasis and additional expectations for serving high school students with disabilities transitioning from school to adult services, post-secondary education and work. DVR is likely to see this population of individuals with disabilities (under age 21) represent a larger proportion of its overall caseload in the years ahead.

Under Order of Selection, DVR has served a larger proportion of individuals with cognitive impairments and mental illness, particularly individuals who receive Social Security benefits. DVR expects that by being able to serve all eligible individuals with no waiting, the make-up of DVR's open caseload will gradually change to reflect services to a more diverse population. Overall this change should lead to larger numbers of people with disabilities becoming employed.

### Primary Disability of Customers - Federal Fiscal Year 2007 - Closed Rehabilitated



Below are three tables showing the current caseload composition for some of DVR's significant demographic groups.

| <b>Ethnic Identification</b> | <b>Percent of all open cases (as of 03/06/08)</b> | <b>Percent of Washington State Population (2005 American Community Survey)</b> |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| African-American             | 8.0%  | 3.3%   |
| Asian-Pacific Islander       | 4.1%  | 7.1%   |
| Caucasian                    | 70.2%   | 81.2%  |
| Hispanic                     | 8.5%  | 8.8%   |
| Native American              | 4.9%  | 1.4%   |
| Other                        | 4.3%  | 3.7%   |

| <b>Category</b>        | <b>Percent of all open cases (as of 03/06/08)</b> |
|------------------------|---|
| Receiving SSI/SSDI     | 43.2%   |
| High School Transition | 21.0%   |

| <b>Primary Disability</b>                     | <b>Percent of all open cases (as of 03/06/08)</b> |
|---|---|
| Cognitive Impairments                         | 30.7%   |
| Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Deaf-Blind      | 8.2%  |
| Mental Illness                                | 26.1%   |
| Mobility Impairment – Orthopedic/Neurological | 26.8%   |
| Other Disability                              | 8.2%  |

Over 69% of the individuals that DVR serves have more than one disability.

## **ACTIVITIES LINK TO MAJOR PARTNERS**

DVR works with a variety of external partners to increase employment opportunities and success for individuals with disabilities. These external partners include businesses working with DVR to develop strategies that help individuals with disabilities achieve employment outcomes. DVR is working to change its approach and partnership with employers to focus on understanding and being able to respond to the human resource needs of employers. DVR must be in a position to quickly respond to employer needs with qualified candidates who demonstrate strong work skills.

DVR will continue to partner with programs funded under the Workforce Investment Act and Rehabilitation Act to leverage resources for individuals served by multiple programs. At the statewide level, DVR and its partners establish written agreements outlining how programs will coordinate and share resources. At the local level, DVR shares case management responsibilities and coordinates funding and service provision with Department of Services for the Blind and/or American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation programs. DVR partners with WorkSource Centers to increase their capacity to serve individuals with disabilities, and refers eligible individuals who can benefit from the resources and services available at no cost.

DVR receives funds from the U.S. Department of Education to provide independent living services to individuals with disabilities and/or to increase capacity in underserved areas or to underserved groups. DVR contracts with seven Centers for Independent Living to provide these services as outlined under Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act. The services are intended to enable individuals to learn skills and receive services needed to achieve greater independence, such as securing non-institutional housing, learning to use public transportation, learning to live independently, including cooking and cleaning, managing money, etc. Learning these skills is often a first step and precursor to obtaining employment services from DVR.

The Rehabilitation Act directs DVR to maintain partnerships with three programs also authorized under the Act. The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) works in partnership with DVR to develop its goals and priorities, to assess and report on the performance of its responsibilities and to evaluate program effectiveness. The State Independent Living Council is a partner in coordinating services provided under Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act related to independent living. The Client Assistance Program (CAP) provides assistance and advocacy to individuals receiving DVR services related to protecting their rights under the Act.

DVR coordinates with two and four year public colleges to ensure appropriate use of public funds in supporting eligible individuals who are also college students. Through an inter-agency agreement, DVR shares information and coordinates with colleges if an eligible individual requires reasonable accommodations in the school setting. DVR is also working with our educational partners on internships, practicum, work experience, and job placement services.

Another partnership is with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to coordinate services for high school students with disabilities

as they transition out of school and into adult services, higher education and work. At the local level, DVR counselors serve as a liaison to every high school in the state to help plan and deliver services to eligible students.

Within the Department of Social and Health Services, DVR partners with the Division of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Division to plan for a system of coordinated service delivery for individuals eligible for more than one DSHS program. Individuals with developmental disabilities and mental illness make up a substantial portion of DVR's caseload. Joint planning is necessary to ensure program coordination and effectiveness, to maximize resources and build capacity. In addition to DSHS partners, DVR also works with developmental disability and mental health representatives at the regional, county and community provider level.

With the end of DVR's waiting list, DVR is reestablishing partnerships with the DSHS Division of Employment and Assistance Programs and the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse. These partnerships waned in recent years because of lengthy delays in services due to the waiting list. DVR is also exploring an emerging relationship with the Department of Veterans Affairs to collaborate on how best to help veterans with service-related injuries get the services they need to return to work.

## **STAKEHOLDER INPUT**

More than 100 individuals attended six statewide meetings in 2007 to provide input to DVR on the goals and priorities outlined in this strategic plan. Attendees included DVR staff, service providers, State Rehabilitation Council members, county program representatives, Client Assistance Program staff, Centers for Independent Living staff, and other stakeholders. In addition, DVR leadership met with VR supervisors, program managers, and headquarters staff in person and distributed a draft strategic plan to all DVR employees for input.

Individuals receiving services from DVR are invited to share comments, feedback and concerns regarding DVR services at State Rehabilitation Council quarterly forums. The Council also conducted a customer survey to learn about customers' experiences and needs related to vocational rehabilitation services. In addition to participating in statewide meetings, the Council formally submitted recommendations to DVR which are reflected in the DVR Strategic Plan.



DVR sends a customer satisfaction survey to each individual at the time of case closure to obtain information about the quality of DVR services. DVR uses this and other information in setting priorities around needed improvements.

## **FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

As DVR moves beyond the waiting list, it will be able to serve eligible individuals upon determination of eligibility. DVR will also be able to serve individuals from disability groups that have been unserved or underserved for several years. With this new capacity, DVR will need to continue to develop new partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships. Increased capacity also provides an opportunity for DVR to reach out to unserved and underserved ethnic minorities. Eliminating the waiting list positions DVR to be able to connect with new communities, provide information about the services we are able to offer, and ensure more individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to apply.

As DVR moves forward another area of emphasis is to have efficient and effective staffing levels in its local offices. DVR needs to have enough staff to serve all customers that apply while avoiding excess staff. Operating with a waiting list for the past seven years made it difficult to clearly understand the real demand for services in a community. In addition, DVR has experienced significant staff turnover at a time when there is a national shortage in vocational rehabilitation counselors. To attract candidates, DVR must continue to work with local college rehabilitation counseling programs, develop strategies to plan for future staffing needs, and ensure employees receive competitive wages.

Individuals with significant disabilities receiving Social Security benefits continue to experience disincentives to employment that impact DVR outcomes. Some Social Security program policies, as well as additional benefit programs DVR customers receive, are disincentives for working. However, other Social Security and state benefit programs have incentives. Unfortunately lack of information and misinformation about the impact of work and availability of work incentives can create confusion regarding the complexity of benefit programs and fear which results from negative experiences with Social Security. Decreased outcomes also negatively impact revenues for the Division. DVR has trained additional staff and expanded benefits planning throughout the rehabilitation process. In addition to benefits planning, DVR will continue to increase counselor skills in securing the necessary resources to support successful employment for social security beneficiaries.

To improve its ability to successfully place individuals in employment, DVR needs to improve its relationship and connection to businesses and employers. DVR needs to partner more effectively with WorkSource Centers, utilize the role DVR's Business Relations Administrator, and support supervisors and counselors in local offices to connect with employers in their communities. One of the methods DVR will use to accomplish this is to hire WorkSource Specialists who will be stationed in WorkSource Centers and specialize in job placement for individuals who have completed VR services and are ready to enter employment. Additionally, DVR will continue to co-locate staff and DVR service at WorkSource centers and other Workforce partner locations.

With the reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act by Congress expected following the Presidential election, there is the possibility of substantial changes in the way high school "transition" youth are served. This could impact the way that DVR interacts with transition youth, the schools they attend, and other agencies serving these young adults.

## Chapter 4 • Goals, Strategies, Methods and Performance Measures

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DVR went through an extensive process of evaluation and prioritization to develop its 2008 State Plan for the Rehabilitation Services Administration, our federal partners. The State Plan became effective October 1, 2007, and is intended to cover a three-year period. As part of that process and with the intent of discontinuing operating under Order of Selection, DVR changed its goals and strategies. The goals and strategies listed below reflect those in DVR's State Plan. This Plan also incorporates new strategies necessary to respond to information learned after the State Plan was submitted.

In October 2007, DVR completed an agency assessment using the DVR Director's Advisory Committee (a geographically diverse cross functional group representing DVR staff and the State Rehabilitation Council) and the Senior Leadership Team. Two of the recommendations from this session have been integrated in the goals and strategies that follow. Several strategies in the 2008 State Plan have already been completed and are not reflected in this plan.

### **GOAL 1: REHABILITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DVR-ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DVR RESOURCES WILL SUPPORT.**

#### **Strategy 1: Discontinue operating under an Order of Selection process.**

##### Methods:

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of vocational rehabilitation needs with the State Rehabilitation Council.
- Conduct ongoing analysis of caseload demand and capacity to set performance and production targets and assure DVR has the resources to serve all eligible individuals.
- Conduct data analysis and develop reports at the office level to help local offices conduct effective, targeted outreach to increase applications.
- Develop outreach strategies in each local area to ensure a continuous flow of new applicants.
- Clearly communicate with employees and partners about DVR's vision and expectations once DVR transitions out of Order of Selection.

Performance Measures:

- DVR does not go back into OOS.
- Number of applications.
- Percent of eligibilities done within 60 days of application.
- Average number of days from application to eligibility.
- Percent of plans written less than 120 days from eligibility.
- Average number of days from eligibility to plan.

**Strategy 2: Design and implement a statewide model for more effectively serving the transition population.**

Methods:

- Share recently developed agreements and expectations between public colleges and universities and DVR and conduct statewide training with field staff.
- Work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to update its inter-agency agreement.
- Engage other partners, including the State Rehabilitation Council, the State Independent Living Council, Centers for Independent Living (CIL), and Workforce Development partners in designing a service delivery model.
- In 2009-2010, implement the model statewide by developing strong partnerships with Workforce Development Youth Councils, high schools, community college and other training and education programs.

Performance Measures:

- Number of rehabilitations for transition students.
- Rehabilitation rate for transition students.

**Strategy 3: Redesign WorkStrides and partner with Washington's one-stop centers to deliver a series of focused workshops statewide to help clients prepare for employment.**

Methods:

- Enlist workforce partners, explore the use of peer facilitators, improve the use of diagnostic assessments, benefits planning and schedule adjustments to facilitate improved participation.
- Create flexibility by adjusting the amount of time needed to complete each phase of the WorkStrides.

Performance Measures:

- Rehabilitation rate for WorkStrides participants.
- Rehabilitation rate for non-WorkStrides participants.

- Number completing each phase of WorkStrides.
- Time from eligibility to plan for WorkStrides participants.
- Time from eligibility to plan for non-WorkStrides participants.

**Strategy 4: Develop opportunities with employers to help individuals gain work experience and entry to employment in jobs that pay well and include benefits.**

Methods:

- Designate a statewide point of contact for employers, customers, and staff interested in establishing a customer internship.
- Market internship and mentoring to employers.
- Initiate efforts to implement a model that will create employment opportunities in government agencies, including increased supported employment opportunities.

Performance Measures:

- Number of customer internships.
- Rehabilitation rate for customers participating in internships.
- Rehabilitation rate for all customers.
- Average hourly wage for rehabilitated customers who participated in an internship.
- Average hourly wage for all rehabilitated customers.
- Average number of hours worked for rehabilitated customers who participated in an internship.
- Average number of hours worked for all rehabilitated customers.

**Strategy 5: Implement identified improvements in the rehabilitation process to increase statewide consistency of case service practices.**

Methods:

- Enhance benefits planning throughout process that supports individuals to set goals for increasing self-sufficiency.
- Implement in-house placement activities statewide.
- Conduct annual statewide case record review of case service practices.

Performance Measures:

- Percent of customers receiving benefits planning.
- Percent of rehabilitations without purchasing placement services.

**Strategy 6: Explore use of external specialists and experts to improve and expand self-employment opportunities.**

Methods:

- Help individuals with low incomes increase self-sufficiency through self-employment.
- Create a network of partners with self-employment expertise who can assist DVR customers interested in self employment outcomes.

Performance Measures:

- Percent of rehabilitations that are self-employment outcomes.

**GOAL 2: IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**Strategy 1: Attract and retain quality staff.**

Methods:

- Develop a recruitment and retention plan based on a comprehensive assessment of staffing needs, including the need to enhance diversity representation.
- Partner with Rehabilitation Counseling programs to plan for meeting staffing needs and work with DSHS and the minority community to reach out to diverse groups.
- Conduct a market study to evaluate DVR pay scale to ensure it is competitive.
- Enhance recognition efforts.
- Provide tuition support for staff who want to progress in their career with DVR.

Performance Measures:

- Annual turnover rate of staff.
- Percent of staff that are minorities.
- Percent of staff that have a disability.
- Satisfaction level of staff as expressed on the employee survey question "in general, I'm satisfied with my job."

**Strategy 2: Design service delivery evaluation methods that provide DVR with timely, useful information and data for decision making.**

Methods:

- Establish an annual program evaluation plan and compliance monitoring methods in cooperation with the State Rehabilitation Council.
- Collect and use information from surveys, studies and data to evaluate program effectiveness and implement improvements.
- Share program evaluation results and information throughout all levels of DVR and with partners.

Performance Measures:

- Percent of cases reviewed on the Supervisor Review Tool with all questions answered positively.
- Customer satisfaction levels expressed in the Planning, Performance, & Evaluation unit.

**Strategy 3: Develop systems for designing and implementing service delivery improvements that are transparent and reflect the involvement of the right employees and partners.**

Methods:

- Develop a systematic approach to implementing program improvements in a timely, consistent and planful way, including a process for clearly communicating changes to employees and partners.
- Involve the Senior Rehabilitation Team in the planning process to improve viability and implementation of new processes.

Performance Measures:

- Percent of cases reviewed on the Supervisor Review Tool with all questions answered positively.

**Strategy 4: Enhance and develop Information Technology resources and tools.**

Methods:

- Use Information Technology to enhance organization capacity, including enhancements to the Intranet/Internet to assist customers, partners, and DVR staff.

- Implement on-line methods for employers, customers and partners to get useful information and to provide DVR with feedback.
- Update the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and IPE amendment applications in its STARS system and other discreet case management applications.
- Report results of Supervisor case reviews and use information for identifying needed improvements in case service practices.
- Implement STARS enhancement to track consents and releases signed by applicants and eligible individuals.

Performance Measures:

- On time percentage of STARS enhancement implementations.

**Strategy 5: Enhance the skills that employees have through improved training methodology.**

Methods:

- Conduct an annual statewide training needs assessment to identify training priorities.
- Redesign core counselor training, including development of a new course that covers the basics of rehabilitation law.
- Conduct bi-annual statewide in-service training addressing critical case service practices.
- Develop and implement a best case service practices training curriculum.
- Implement improvements in the case management system and provide training on case documentation.

Performance Measures:

- Percent of staff achieving a 60% rehabilitation rate.
- Percent of staff achieving their IPE target.
- Percent of staff achieving their Rehab target.
- Completed annual training needs assessment.
- Percent of cases reviewed on the Supervisor Review Tool with all questions answered positively.

**GOAL 3: DISTINGUISH DVR'S ROLE IN THE DISABILITY SERVICES / EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM**



## **Strategy 1: Market DVR to employers**

### **Methods:**

- Develop a marketing approach and plan to guide the development of DVR's partnership efforts with employers.
- Use external business professionals to learn how to effectively serve business needs and develop a marketing plan.
- Improve skills of DVR staff in partnering with employers so they can counsel clients more effectively.
- Collaborate with key partners (SRC, CRPs, and Workforce Development) to enhance connections with the employer community.
- Publish and distribute publications and materials about DVR services.
- Develop the Business-Employer Support Team (BEST) to create better linkages with employers and connect DVR staff and clients to employers who are hiring.
- BEST will also strengthen connections with local WorkSource Employer Services teams.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Number of rehabilitations.
- Rehabilitation rate.
- Number of placements done through WorkSource.
- Number of different employers.

## **Strategy 2: Increase the use of comparable services and benefits.**

### **Methods:**

- Expand access to and use of services offered by Centers for Independent Living.
- Complete an environmental scan to record resources we know about and where gaps exist.
- Develop electronic tools to help staff, partners, and clients access information about available services and benefits.
- Develop a commitment to excellent customer service by connecting customers to the best resources available in the community.

Performance Measures:

- Percent of plans which receive comparable services and benefits.
- Percent of closed cases that used WorkSource.
- Average cost per plan for closed cases.
- Average cost per plan for rehabilitated cases.
- Average cost per plan for closed other cases.

**Strategy 3: Enhance and build partnerships that advance opportunities for individuals with disabilities to progress toward employment, including supported employment.**

Methods:

- Continue to enhance partnerships that advance employment opportunities, including the State Rehabilitation Council, Workforce Development System, Centers for Independent Living, Client Assistance Program, tribal governments, mental health and developmental disabilities programs, Project SEARCH partners and others.
- Develop and deliver a DVR-Mental Health Division cross-system training that will lead to better employment outcomes for DVR customers and better coordination with mental health providers.
- Reconnect and build relationships with organizations that serve a broader segment of the disabled population, including the Veterans Administration, Labor and Industries, colleges and vocational programs, government, traumatic brain injury service providers, substance abuse programs and public assistance programs.
- Collaborate with disability and employment partners to sponsor events in the community focusing on disability issues, such as mentoring, disability awareness, employment, transportation, independent living, benefits issues, etc.

Performance Measures:

- Number of applications.
- Number of referrals from each of the following: Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Community Services Division, Veterans Administration, and higher education.

**Strategy 4: Develop a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) business model that better meets the needs of DVR and enhances CRP effectiveness.**

**Methods:**

- Develop capacity and quality of community rehabilitation program services
- Develop capacity for external providers to offer specialized benefit planning services on a fee-for-service basis.
- Reevaluate provider procurement and management models to ensure it supports high performance at a reasonable cost for both DVR and providers.

**Performance Measures:**

- Rehabilitation rate of customers with referral to a CRP.
- Amount of money spent on CRP services.

## Chapter 5 • Performance Assessments

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DVR engages in numerous ongoing activities to assess performance. The DVR Director presents DVR's performance results to DSHS using GMAP reporting. Other examples of performance assessments DVR has undergone recently include internal case file reviews completed by DVR Supervisors each month to monitor quality and consistency of case services. DVR will implement a statewide case review this year that uses a team comprised of DVR employees to conduct a quality assurance review of randomly selected cases.

Additionally, DVR's Internal Auditor conducts annual audits of 6 DVR units for fiscal compliance and accountability. The Director's Advisory Committee completed an agency self-assessment using the Baldrige criteria. DVR uses the results of client and employee surveys to collect feedback and identify follow up actions. Comprehensive, formal program reviews are conducted by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), our federal oversight agency, as required under the Rehabilitation Act. RSA also provides an annual "report card" comparing the performance of Washington VR against all other state VR programs.

This year, DVR began posting each DVR office's performance targets and real-time results using a "dashboard." These results are posted on DVR's intranet and available to all staff members.

For over two years DVR has conducted statewide GMAP presentations that are presented to the Secretary and other executive leaders of DSHS. Field Services managers also use GMAP reporting to manage and report performance results internally. The GMAP process has benefitted DVR in the following ways:

- Increased dissemination of information.
- Increased awareness of performance at multiple levels.
- Increased accountability for results.
- Identified strategies and traced effectiveness.
- Customized strategies based on geographic issues and other dynamics.
- Increased understanding of factors that impact Area performance and needs.

DVR has a system in place to track the consistency of case service delivery. For the last two years, each month VR Supervisors review two cases from each counselor's caseload. This review process has provided

DVR with valuable case service delivery information. Three ways that this information has been used are: 1) policy changes to address areas of non-compliance, 2) improvements to DVR's caseload management system (STARS) and 3) hiring of a Quality Assurance person whose responsibilities include "consulting, coaching and support to supervisors and field staff to address identified organizational quality assurance issues."

DVR regularly conducts surveys to evaluate how staff and customers perceive DVR. DVR has participated in three customer survey efforts over the last two years. DSHS conducts a biannual customer survey, the State Rehabilitation Council conducted two surveys (one for customers in plan and one for customers on the waiting list), and DVR sends out a customer survey within 30 days of case closure for every case that has been in plan.

These customer surveys have provided DVR with the following types of information:

- Regular ongoing sense of how customers perceive DVR.
- The level of satisfaction with DVR services.
- Customers frequently express an appreciation for the services they receive – even when the case is closed unsuccessfully.
- How well DVR staff listen to customers.

In both 2006 and 2007 DVR participated in DSHS employee surveys. These employee surveys provided DVR with both areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Some examples of information gained from the employee survey include:

- DVR employees have a clear sense of DVR's mission about what they do and what DVR does.
- DVR employees know how they contribute to that mission.
- DVR employees have a strong appreciation for "working with and helping clients."
- DVR employees feel that they and their coworkers are held accountable.
- DVR needs to improve efforts to help employees feel recognized for the good work they do.
- DVR needs to improve efforts to utilize customer input to improve processes.

As part of Section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) is

required to conduct annual reviews and periodic on-site monitoring of programs authorized under Title I of the Act to determine whether a state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency is complying substantially with the provisions of its State Plan under section 101 of the Act and with the evaluation standards and performance indicators established under section 106.

The most recent 107 review was conducted between the fall of 2006 and summer of 2007. This review included an on-site review of a number of program areas, conference calls with contractors and community partners, meetings with the State Rehabilitation and Independent Living Councils and meetings with DVR stakeholders. DVR was commended for improvements in case service provisions, quality assurance improvements and for its strong partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council. The following table summarizes the three primary recommendations of the Rehabilitation Services Administration's 107 compliance review. Two critical compliance issues were resolved by December 31, 2007 with the completion of a Public Institutions of Higher Education (PIHE) agreement and the appointment of the CAP Director to the SRC. The full report may be viewed using the following link:

<http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/rehab/107-reports/2007/index.html>

| Goal  | Strategies   | Technical Assistance   |
|---|--|--|
| 1. DVR will manage its resources in an effective manner so that it can improve the quantity and quality of employment outcomes achieved by individuals with disabilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DVR will conduct caseload analysis to determine how many new applications each office should be targeting to maintain full caseload capacity as it eliminates the waiting list for services;</li> <li>- DVR will establish new area office targets for applications;</li> <li>- DVR will manage caseload growth and anticipated expenditures through use of projection tools and the ongoing monitoring of performance and expenditures; and</li> <li>- DVR will train field staff on how to build and manage full</li> </ul> | To assist DVR to achieve the goal, RSA will inform DVR of any effective practices used by other agencies with respect to the management and reduction of large waiting lists under an OOS. |

| Goal   | Strategies   | Technical Assistance  |
|--|--|---|
|  | caseloads when the agency is no longer implementing the OOS.   |   |
| 2. DVR will develop a CRP business model that meets the needs of the agency and enhances provider effectiveness.                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyze and evaluate CRP contract results and their relationship to rehabilitation outcomes; establish performance targets;</li> <li>- Publish and disseminate reports that reflect CRP contract results;</li> <li>- Build capacity of CRPs to offer benefits planning on a fee for service basis in high demand areas; and</li> <li>- Assess CRP capacity issues related to current caseload and referral levels.</li> </ul> | RSA will inform DVR of any effective practices used by other agencies to address this issue, and will identify additional technical assistance resources as requested by the agency.                                    |
| 3. The governor will appoint a representative of the CAP to the SRC for DVR, in accordance with 34 CFR 361.17(b) (1) (iii), by September 30, 2007. |  | RSA is available to provide further explanation to DVR, the SRC and representatives of the Governor's Office regarding the regulatory provisions concerning the appointment of a representative from the CAP to the SRC |

## Chapter 6 • Internal Capacity Assessment

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### **WORKFORCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY**

DVR places an emphasis on having a qualified, responsive staff. This is even more relevant as DVR ends being in Order of Selection. Nationally, a shortage of vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs) exists, this has impacted DVR. DVR has taken several steps to reduce the impact of this burden. DVR recently expanded the range of possible master's degrees that allow a person to meet the requirements to become a VRC. This change did not lessen the competencies required to become a VRC, only brought the possible degrees more in-line with other national VR programs. Additionally, DVR has dramatically enhanced and broadened its recruitment and outreach efforts. These steps have paid dividends. From January 2007 to December 2007 the average number of applicants per position increased from 8 to 17 and the average number of days from requisition release to job offer dropped from 177 to 36.

Another area of focus for DVR's workforce capacity is workforce demographics. Workforce demographics show up in two primary ways: there are a large number of potential retirements within the next five years and different dynamics relating to expectations of different generations of workers. About 40% of DVR staff is capable of retiring with the next 5 years. Being prepared for the loss of this key human capital is vital for DVR's long-term success. Having four working generations with very different needs will be a challenge for DVR in the future. Human resource systems will need to be flexible to address the varied styles.

Organizational capacity has been enhanced by changes made to the field structure. In 2006 DVR reorganized into three service delivery areas. This shift has allowed DVR to increase flexibility and creativity of service delivery models.

### **FINANCIAL CAPACITY**

DVR has eliminated the waiting list for services and is currently able to serve all customers as they are determined eligible for services. DVR has the financial resources to continue to serve all customers as they apply for services for the length of this Strategic Plan. This sustained capacity will enable DVR to amend its State Plan and discontinue operating under an Order of Selection.



## **SERVICE DELIVERY CAPACITY**

DVR's service delivery capacity has changed dramatically now that there is no longer a waiting list for services. DVR is in the process of informing partners about DVR's referral process to create knowledge of DVR capacity.

Under Order of Selection, DVR was required to prioritize services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. Often these individuals needed higher cost services for a longer period of time. As a result, the average cost per case rose dramatically which resulted in fewer individuals being served.

By changing service delivery practices, providing more services directly and strengthening partnerships with other agencies, DVR has reduced its average cost per case significantly. At the same time, we have made business decisions to discontinue expenditures that did not contribute to employment outcomes. As DVR moves beyond the waiting list, DVR anticipates being able to serve a broader diversity of disability groups, including individuals who do not require extensive or long-term services. This, in turn, is expected to further reduce the average cost per case.

For the first time in several years, DVR is well-positioned to increase service delivery capacity and reach out to disability groups or ethnic minority groups that have been unserved or underserved and offer services to all eligible individuals.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CAPACITY**

DVR's Information Technology (IT) model is based upon best practices and compliance with DSHS's overarching enterprise architectural principles and guidelines. DVR's IT priorities are driven by DVR's business needs and drivers. DVR's IT unit is comprised of the following teams that deploy services and support throughout the division: Application Development Team; Data and Systems Analysis Team; Field Services and Support; and Help Desk Support. These cohesive teams support DVR in meeting its business objectives and goals.

DVR's IT resources are nimble and responsive to evolving and dynamic business needs. Despite the ability to respond quickly, DVR IT maintains a strong emphasis on using solid project management principles, communicating effectively, and looking forward strategically.

DVR IT provides leadership with other State of Washington IT partners and participates within various IT governance forums to evaluate, test and provide feedback on emerging technologies. DVR IT is recognized as a valued IT resource within the Department.

DVR's IT capacity will be impacted over the course of the next strategic plan period by multiple technology projects including but not limited to the following:

- Migration of DVR's Service Tracking and Reporting System (STARS) to the Microsoft .NET framework.
- Deployment of Microsoft Office 2007 Desktop Productivity Suite.
- Completion of a desktop PC seat management model by utilizing PC leasing.
- Ongoing evaluation of adaptive and accessibility related technologies.
- Responding to evolving and dynamic DVR business needs.
- Comprehensive utilization of SharePoint services as offered and hosted by DSHS/ISSD.
- Refreshing web resources to allow for better access to DVR services.

DVR expects to maintain a highly predictable, high performing and stable IT environment throughout this strategic plan period.

## **FACILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY**

When a lease is up for renewal DVR will look at options including co-location with WorkSource and other Workforce partners.

DVR has established guidelines for the location of DVR leased facilities that ensure our customers can access our facilities through public or private transportation means. Further, DVR Field Offices must be located within 300 feet (100 Yard Rule) from public bus stops that are operated during standard business hours.

All facilities are required to be open from 8 AM through 5 PM, Monday through Friday. All facilities must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Washington State General Administration's Accessibility requirements and standards. All offices, including the State Office, are required, by policy, to maintain telecommunication systems that allow disabled persons that are hard of hearing, deaf, and/or blind to freely interact with us. People with mobility challenges are accommodated based on their individual needs. Interior office structures

are modified so wheelchairs and other mobility aids are taken into consideration. As new and improved technologies become available, DVR arranges for those systems to be installed as part of the facility-of-the-future concept.

DVR does not envision facility or infrastructure issues impacting service delivery over the life of this Strategic Plan.

## **DIVERSITY & CULTURAL COMPETENCY**

DVR places a high priority in being a diverse and culturally competent organization. This emphasis shows up in many ways. First of all, DVR is working to ensure that its staff represents the disability community it serves with a diverse staff that reflects the community. To ensure this diversity of staff DVR works extensively with college programs that train people in rehabilitation.

DVR values the partnerships that have been developed with the tribal VR programs. To continue to strengthen these relationships DVR holds quarterly meetings with tribal vocational rehabilitation (VR) leaders as well as offering DVR trainings to our tribal partners. DVR renewed its commitment to tribal VR programs this year through an updated inter-agency agreement reflecting our intent to engage in collaborative services for the benefit of our mutual customers.

Customer outreach to diverse populations is also important to DVR. DVR works to ensure that all disability groups are being effectively served while extending efforts to serve customers of various minority backgrounds. As DVR transitions out of Order of Selection it will have the ability to be more rigorous in its outreach efforts to groups that were not served effectively while there was a waiting list for services. Currently two minority groups (Hispanic and Asian-Pacific Islander) are underserved compared to their representation in Washington's population, though the relative percentage of Hispanic applicants has increased over the last year and a half. However, DVR has not experienced a success rate with African-Americans and Native Americans comparable to other groups. DVR will work with partners to address both of these issues over the course of this Strategic Plan.

## Appendix - Method Matrix

| <b>Goal 1: REHABILITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DVR-ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DVR RESOURCES WILL SUPPORT.</b><br><b>Strategy 1: Discontinue operating under an Order of Selection process.</b> |  |                           |                       |                                   |                |     |                       |       |
|---|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
| Method  |  | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|   |  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1   | Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of vocational rehabilitation needs with the State Rehabilitation Council.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2   | Conduct ongoing analysis of caseload demand and capacity to set performance and production targets and assure DVR has the resources to serve all eligible individuals. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3   | Conduct data analysis and develop reports at the office level to help local offices conduct effective, targeted outreach to increase applications.                     | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 4   | DVR will develop outreach strategies in each local area to ensure a continuous flow of new applicants.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 5   | Clearly communicate with employees and partners about DVR's vision and expectations once DVR transitions out of Order of Selection.                                    | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 1: REHABILITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DVR-ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DVR RESOURCES WILL SUPPORT.**

**Strategy 2: Design and implement a statewide model for more effectively serving the transition population.**

| Method   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1 Share recently developed agreements and expectations between public colleges and universities and DVR and conduct statewide training with field staff.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2 Work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to update its inter-agency agreement.  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3 Engage other partners, including the State Rehabilitation Council, the State Independent Living Council, Centers for Independent Living (CIL), and Workforce Development partners in designing a service delivery model. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 4 In 2009-2010, implement the model statewide by developing strong partnerships with Workforce Development Youth Councils, high schools, community college and other training and education programs.                      | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 1: REHABILITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DVR-ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DVR RESOURCES WILL SUPPORT.**

**Strategy 3: Redesign WorkStrides and partner with Washington's one-stop centers to deliver a series of focused workshops to help clients prepare for employment and implement it statewide.**

| Method |  | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Enlist workforce partners, explore the use of peer facilitators, improve the use of diagnostic assessments, benefits planning and schedule adjustments to facilitate improved participation. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2      | Create flexibility by adjusting the amount of time needed to complete each phase of the WorkStrides.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 1: REHABILITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DVR-ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DVR RESOURCES WILL SUPPORT.**

**Strategy 4: DVR will develop opportunities with employers to help individuals gain work experience and entry to employment in jobs that pay well and include benefits.**

| Method |  | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Designate a statewide point of contact for employers, customers, and staff interested in establishing a customer internship. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

|   |   |   |   |     |     |     |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| 2 | Market internship and mentoring to employers.   | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
| 3 | Initiate efforts to implement a model that will create employment opportunities in government agencies, including increased supported employment opportunities. | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |

| <b>Goal 1: REHABILITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DVR-ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DVR RESOURCES WILL SUPPORT.</b><br><b>Strategy 5: Implement identified improvements in the rehabilitation process to increase statewide consistency of case service practices.</b> |  |                           |                       |                                   |                |     |                       |       |
|---|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
| Method  |  | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|   |  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1   | Enhance benefits planning throughout process that supports individuals to set goals for increasing self-sufficiency. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2   | Implement in-house placement activities statewide.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3   | Conduct annual statewide case record review of case service practices.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 1: REHABILITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DVR-ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS DVR RESOURCES WILL SUPPORT.**

**Strategy 6: Explore use of external specialists and experts to improve and expand self-employment opportunities.**

| Method |  | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Help individuals with low incomes increase self-sufficiency through self-employment.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2      | Create a network of partners with self-employment expertise who can assist DVR customers interested in self employment outcomes. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 2: IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**Strategy 1: Attract and retain quality staff.**

| Method |   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |   | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Develop a recruitment and retention plan based on a comprehensive assessment of staffing needs, including the need to enhance diversity representation. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |



|   |  |   |   |     |     |     |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| 2 | Partner with Rehabilitation Counseling programs to plan for meeting staffing needs and work with DSHS and the minority community to reach out to diverse groups. | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
| 3 | Conduct a market study to evaluate DVR pay scale to ensure it is competitive.  | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
| 4 | Enhance staff recognition efforts.   | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
| 5 | Provide tuition support for staff who want to progress in their career with DVR.   | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |

| <b>Goal 2: IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS</b><br><b>Strategy 2: Design service delivery evaluation methods that provide DVR with timely, useful information and data for decision making.</b> |   |                           |                       |                                   |                |     |                       |       |
|---|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
| Method  |   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|   |   | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1   | Establish an annual program evaluation plan and compliance monitoring methods in cooperation with the State Rehabilitation Council. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2   | Collect and use information from surveys, studies and data to evaluate program effectiveness and implement improvements.            | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3   | Share program evaluation results and information throughout all levels of DVR and with partners.                                    | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 2: IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**Strategy 3: Develop systems for designing and implementing service delivery improvements that are transparent and reflect the involvement of the right employees and partners.**

| Method |  | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Develop a systematic approach to implementing program improvements in a timely, consistent and planful way, including a process for clearly communicating changes to employees and partners. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2      | Involve the Senior Rehabilitation Team in the planning process to improve viability and implementation of new processes.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 2: IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**Strategy 4: Enhance and develop Information Technology resources and tools.**

| Method |  | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |  | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Use Information Technology to enhance organization capacity, including enhancements to the Intranet/Internet to assist customers, partners, and DVR staff. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

|   |   |   |   |     |     |     |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| 2 | Implement on-line methods for employers, customers and partners to get useful information and to provide DVR with feedback.                             | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
| 3 | Update the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and IPE amendment applications in the STARS system and other discreet case management applications. | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
| 4 | Report results of Supervisor case reviews and use information for identifying needed improvements in case service practices.                            | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
| 5 | Implement STARS enhancement to track consents and releases signed by applicants and eligible individuals.   | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |

## **Goal 2: IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**Strategy 5: Enhance the skills that employees have through improved training methodology.**

| <b>Method</b> |   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|---------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|               |   | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1             | Conduct an annual statewide training needs assessment to identify training priorities.                                | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2             | Redesign core counselor training, including development of a new course that covers the basics of rehabilitation law. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3             | Conduct bi-annual statewide in-service training addressing critical case service practices.                           | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 4             | Develop and implement a best case service practices training curriculum.  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

|   |  |   |   |     |     |     |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| 5 | Implement improvements in the case management system and provide training on case documentation. | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
|---|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|

**Goal 3: DISTINGUISH DVR'S ROLE IN THE DISABILITY SERVICES / EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM**

**Strategy 1: Market DVR to employers.**

| Method |   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |   | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Develop a marketing approach and plan to guide the development partnership efforts with employers.  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2      | Use external business professionals to learn how to effectively serve business needs and develop a marketing plan.  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3      | Improve skills of DVR staff in partnering with employers so they can counsel clients more effectively.  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 4      | Collaborate with key partners (SRC, CRPs, and Workforce Development) to enhance connections with the employer community.                                  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 5      | Publish and distribute publications and materials about DVR services.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 6      | Develop the Business-Employer Support Team (BEST) to create better linkages with employers and connect DVR staff and clients to employers who are hiring. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 7      | BEST will also strengthen connections with local WorkSource Employer Services teams.  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

| <b>Goal 3: DISTINGUISH DVR'S ROLE IN THE DISABILITY SERVICES / EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM</b> |   |                           |                       |                                   |                |     |                       |       |
|--|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
| <b>Strategy 2: Increase the use of comparable services and benefits.</b>             |   |                           |                       |                                   |                |     |                       |       |
| <b>Method</b>  |   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|  |   | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1  | Expand access to and use of services offered by Centers for Independent Living.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2  | Complete an environmental scan to record resources we know about and determine where gaps exist.                                    | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3  | Develop electronic tools to help staff, partners, and clients access information about available resources, services, and benefits. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 4  | Develop a commitment to excellent customer service by connecting customers to the best resources available in the community.        | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

**Goal 3: DISTINGUISH DVR'S ROLE IN THE DISABILITY SERVICES / EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM**

**Strategy 3: Enhance and build partnerships that advance opportunities for individuals with disabilities to progress toward employment, including supported employment.**

| Method |   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |   | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Continue to enhance partnerships that advance employment opportunities, including the State Rehabilitation Council, Workforce Development System, Centers for Independent Living, Client Assistance Program, tribal governments, mental health and developmental disabilities programs, Project SEARCH partners and others. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2      | Develop and deliver a DVR-Mental Health Division cross-system training that will lead to better employment outcomes for DVR customers and better coordination with mental health providers.   | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3      | Reconnect and build relationships with organizations that serve a broader segment of the disabled population, including the Veterans Administration, Labor and Industries, colleges and vocational programs, Government, traumatic brain injury service providers, substance abuse programs and public assistance programs. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |

|   |  |   |   |     |     |     |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| 4 | Collaborate with disability and employment partners to sponsor events in the community focusing on disability issues, such as mentoring, disability awareness, employment, transportation, independent living, benefits issues, etc. | Y | N | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | N | N |
|---|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|---|---|

**Goal 3: DISTINGUISH DVR'S ROLE IN THE DISABILITY SERVICES / EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM**

**Strategy 4: Develop a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) business model that better meets the needs of DVR and enhances CRP effectiveness.**

| Method |   | Can Use Current Resources |                       | Need New Resources (in thousands) |                |     | Require New Authority |       |
|--------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-------|
|        |   | Existing resources        | Reallocated resources | Operating Budget                  | Capital Budget | IT  | Legislation           | Other |
| 1      | Develop capacity and quality of community rehabilitation program services.  | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 2      | Develop capacity for external providers to provide specialized benefit planning services on a fee-for-service basis.                          | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |
| 3      | Reevaluate provider procurement and management models to ensure it supports high performance at a reasonable cost for both DVR and providers. | Y                         | N                     | \$0                               | \$0            | \$0 | N                     | N     |







This document is also available electronically at:

[www1.dshs.wa.gov/strategic](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/strategic)

Persons with disabilities may request a hard copy by contacting DSHS at: 360.902.7800, or TTY: 800.422.7930.

Questions about the strategic planning process may be directed to DSHS Constituent Services at: 1.800.737.0617.

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